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Dear Budget Conferee,

On behalf of Research!America, the nation's largest public education and advocacy alliance dedicated to making medical progress a higher national priority, we are writing to thank you for your participation on the Conference Committee for the Fiscal Year 2016 budget resolution. We appreciate the conferee's efforts to advance American priorities in a fiscally responsible manner. In that context, we hope you will help champion inclusion in the final budget resolution of a Senate provision that would establish a deficit neutral reserve fund for the National Institutes of Health (NIH). This provision was offered as an amendment by Senator Jerry Moran (R-KS) and approved on a solid bipartisan basis.

For the millions of Americans waiting for effective treatments and cures across the country, medical progress is not an option, it is an imperative. The Moran amendment is an opportunity for members of Congress to stand together in support of patients and their loved ones. Medical research and the innovations it enables are also pivotal to the nation's fiscal health, bearing importantly on U.S. economic potential and the success of efforts to "bend the cost curve" as our nation ages and health and long-term care spending grows. But federal funding for medical research has failed to keep up with inflation over the last decade, slowing progress and the benefits it confers. We are living in a time of incredible opportunity to combat the diseases that threaten human health. Our nation's labs and research institutions are the best in the world, but funding shortfalls are shutting down promising research and forcing young scientists to pursue other careers.

Research!America appreciates the difficult task facing the Budget Conference as it seeks to simultaneously confront the federal deficit and debt, strengthen the United States and promote the well-being of Americans. We firmly believe that increased funding for medical research is a means of advancing all three of these fundamental goals. As you negotiate the budget conference report, we urge you to recede to the Senate on the Moran amendment. We thank you and your respective staff members for your hard work, responsiveness and determination to advance the best interests of America and Americans. If you have questions about this letter, please contact Ellie Dehoney at (571) 482-2717 or edehoney@researchamerica.org

Sincerely,

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